

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 /094 W

----- 084617

R 131430Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3924

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0323

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT LT

SUBJ: DETENTION OF LAWYER OF BCP DEFENDANTS

REF : MASERU A-17

1. RAND DAILY MAIL MAR 12 CARRIED STORY THAT MOSOTHO LAWYER SAMUEL SEOTSANYANA, DEFENDING 24 OF BCP IN DETENTION AWAITING TRIAL ON CONSPIRACY CHARGES, WAS HIMSELF DETAINED LAST WEEKEND. HIS HOME AND OFFICE WERE REPORTEDLY SEARCHED BY POLICE. MAIL SAID HE BEING HELD UNDER NEW PROVISIONS OF INTERNAL SECURITY ACT WHICH ALLOW GOVERNMENT TO DETAIN SUSPECTS OF POSSIBLE SECURITY VIOLATIONS FOR 60-DAY PERIODS WITHOUT ACCESS BY LAWYERS OR RELATIVES.

2. PRESUMPTION IS THAT SEOTSANYANA DETAINED ALTHOUGH IT BEING CLOSELY HELD BY POLICE. HEAD OF INFORMATION DEPARTMENT IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE ATTEMPTED TO VERIFY STORY WITH POLICE BUT RECEIVED "NO COMMENT" REPLY. HIS CHECK WITH OTHER SOURCES LED HIM TO BELIEF MAIL ACCOUNT ACCURATE. LEADING MEMBER OF LOCAL PRESS CORPS CHECKED STORY WITH POLICE BUT ALSO COULD NOT OBTAIN CONFIRMATION.

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3. SEOTSANYANA NOT PERSONALLY KNOWN TO EMBASSY BUT IS

DESCRIBED AS YOUNG LAWYER WHO HAS REPRESENTED DETAINEES IN
PAST. THIS, HOWEVER, DOES NOT DISTINGUISH HIM FROM SEVERAL
OTHER LAWYERS IN LESOTHO AND WE CAN YET DEDUCE NO REASON FOR
DETENTION OTHER THAN HIS ROLE IN DEFENDING PRESENT BCP
ACCUSED. IF THIS SOLE REASON FOR DETENTION IT REPRESENTS
HEAVY-HANDED GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PRESAGES OTHERS WILL
RECEIVE SIMILAR TREATMENT.
HAUGHT

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NNN

Message Attributes

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30 JUN 2005

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, LT, BC, ZA, BASUTOLAND CONGRESS PARTY, BCP, (SEOTSANYANA, SAMUEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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